

of the man's character that a correspondence so voluminous as was his and so confidential, should, with the single exception of the letter already noticed, have made no allusions to a subject so important and so calculated to absorb one's thoughts. Though Jefferson had started life with a good inheritance, and had by skilful management throughout his young manhood materially increased it, a certain fatality seemed afterwards to follow his property. On the dower which his wife brought him, there rested a British debt of one-third its value. This debt he paid twice, having turned it over to the State in accordance with a statute, and yet refusing to allow it to be paid in depreciated State scrip'. This required the sale of a portion of his estate, which went at a heavy sacrifice. After the Revolutionary war, he was in public service continuously from 1784 to 1809, with the exception of three years. From none of the offices he held, save that of Vice-President, was he able to meet his expenses, but he was forced to draw largely upon his own private fortune. Nor was he guilty of extravagance during this period. A retrenchment of expenses may, it is true, have been possible on certain points; but he regarded the demands of hospitality and a fitting style of life as expected of him. Serious as were these drains upon his property, it was at the time of his retirement from the Presidency, sufficient to have kept him in more than comfort for the rest of his life. He appreciated, however, that to this end there was need of careful management, especially as he found his estates in much the same condition as on his retirement from Washington's Cabinet. But a style of living was now forced upon him which, as the years went by, more and more effectually did away with his hope that he might again set his affairs upon a firm footing. He was subjected to the demands of the most extensive and miscellaneous hospitality that our nation has ever seen. No estate of his day could have stood such a drain upon it. To this were added the disastrous financial results of the war of 1812; and in 1819 Jefferson was called upon to pay an endorsement of twenty thousand dollars for an intimate friend. This left him a ruined man. He had no complaints to utter, either against fortune, or against any indi-